1r Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard AV3

He fired off his gun, which however did not divert the attention of the stag. At last, he found out what it was that the stag was looking at. It turned out to be a huge "Harginn," which had swallowed a large Markhor with the exception of his horns! There was the porcupine out of whose mouth protruded the head and horns of the Markhor!! My Ghilgiti, on the contrary, said that the Harginn was a great snake "like a big fish called Nang." Perhaps, Harginn means a monster or dragon, and is applied to different animals in the two countries of Ghilghit and Astór.

7.—A FIGHT BETWEEN WOLVES AND A BEAR WHO WANTED TO DIG THEIR GRAVE.

A curious animal something like a wolf is also described. The species is called "Kŏ."* These animals are like dogs; their snouts are of a red colour, and are very long; they hunt in herds of ten or twenty and track game which they bring down, one herd or one Kŏ, as the case may be, relieving the other at certain stages. A Shikári once reported that he saw a large number of them asleep. They were all ranged in a single long line. A bear approached, and by the aid of a long branch measured the line He then went to some distance and measuring the ground dug it out to the extent of the line in length. He then went back to measure the breadth of the sleeping troop when his branch touched one of the animals which at once jumped up and roused the others. They all then pursued him and brought him down. Some of them harassed him in front, whilst one of them went behind and sucked his stomach clean out. This seems to be a favourite method of these animals in destroying game. They do not attack men, but bring down horses, sheep and game.

* This is undoubtedly the *canis rutilans*, a species of wild dog, which hunts in packs after the wild goat, so numerously found in the high mountains round Gilgit. The snow-ounce also pursues it. Dardistan, specially Hunza, is the paradise of the ibex, the wild sheep, including the *ovis poli*, and the red bear.

The Flora and Fauna of Dardistan have been so minutely described in Part II. of my "Languages and Races of Dardistan," though mainly from a linguistic standpoint, that I have nothing to say here about the products and animals of that country. Nor need I say anything about the dress of its people, except that its rolled-up woollen cap is, practically, the sign of the brotherhood (sometimes like that of Cain) among all members of the Dard race, and, at once, distinguishes them from Pathans, Affghans, Kashmiris, and others. The beautifully-knit stockings are also a Dard art and seem to have suggested, rather than followed, Kashmir patterns. Above all, the quasi-Celtic brass brooches of the women, and the family axes of the Hunza-Nagyris denote the antiquity of the Dard race. Curious is also the dress, light as air and softly warm, made of the fluff of the white giant vulture or of that of the wild fowl. I must also refer the reader who wishes to know details about the rivers, mountains, etc., of Dardistan, and the occupations of its peoples, to Part II. of my "Languages and Races of Dardistan," and to the main volume, of which this is a Supplement, namely, the so-called "Hunza and Nagyr Handbook," a volume of 47 folio pages.

Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 ~~AU1 Afghanistan AU1~~
4 AVJ Dard AV3

Ra to his poorest subject, lived entirely by agriculture. 174
According to tradition, Shiri Buddutt's rule extended over Chitral, Yassin, Tangir, Darel, Chilas, Gor, Astor, Hunza, Nager, and Haramosh, all of which were probably held by tributary princes of the same family. The first decline of prosperity was due apparently to the introduction of Mahommedanism, by which the Shin kingdom was broken up into a number of small independent states, which, from that date, commenced to make periodical wars with one another; but the final blow to the prosperity of the country was administered by the establishment of a warlike ruling race in Yassin, three centuries later.

A glance at the map will show that Gilgit is situated in 133
the centre of the most mountainous region of the Himalayas. Nowhere else in the world, probably, is there to be 361
found so great a number of deep valleys and lofty mountains in so small a compass. Within a radius of 65 miles from Gilgit the survey maps show, amidst innumerable smaller peaks, eleven varying from 18,000 to 20,000 feet, seven from 20,000 to 22,000 feet, six from 22,000 to 24,000 feet, and eight from 24,000 to 26,600 feet; while half of the tract thus included still remains to be surveyed. A rival to Everest and Kinchinjunga may yet be found among the mountains of Kaffiristan.

From Gilgit, mountain roads radiate into all the surround- [487]
ing valleys, and it is easy to see how favourable is its position for the establishment of the head-quarters of a confederacy of small states. The lofty mountains around it, though barren and rocky at their bases, are covered with verdure higher up; and everywhere above 7,000 feet are thick fine forests, grassy glades, deep glens, and running streams, of which a view of the mountains from below gives little promise. 136
Here the wild goat (*C. Falconeri*) roams in great numbers 224
almost undisturbed, his chief foes being the snow ounce (*F. Uncia*), and the wild dog (*C. Rutilans*), of which packs are sometimes seen. In winter, when forced down to lower ground by the snow, a few fall victims to village matchlocks; but the number thus slain is few, as the Dards are not keen hunters. Above the forest, where innumerable peaks tower up in their panoply of eternal snow and glacier, ibex (*C. Sibirica*) are found in great numbers. The solitudes which they share with the red bear (*U. Isabellinus*) and the snow cock (*T. Himalayanus*) are rarely disturbed by the hunter's voice. 136
On the lower and more barren hills, below the forest, are to

Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 AUI-Afghanistan-AUI
4 AV3 Dard AV3

136 be found numerous flocks of the wild sheep (*O. Vignei*). At an elevation of 11,000 feet, wild onions grow in great profusion, and to this fact the range is indebted for its Chinese name Tsungling. (The Onion Mountains.)

133 135 316 The principal difficulty in communication is caused by the rivers, which in winter are shrunk to small dimensions, but in summer, fed by snow-fields and glaciers of enormous extent, become impassable torrents, bringing down tons of soil in their turbid waters. Many of the streams are rich in gold, especially those flowing from the great Rakiposh Mountain, and it is probable that a scientific search for minerals [823] would be well repaid. The natives believe that the gold is generated by the glaciers, because the greatest quantity is found in the glacier mud, and there are traditions of small but rich veins of earth having been occasionally laid bare by earthquakes. Gold-washing is only practised in winter, and then by none but the poorest and meanest of the population, though the quantity found even with the rude apparatus employed is sometimes very remunerative. The gold itself is of fair quality, the best being of twenty carats.

361 316 Nearly half way between Gilgit and the Indus is the Bagrot Valley, which contains several flourishing villages, and is capable of supporting a population of 2,000 or 3,000 souls. The Bagrot gold-washings are celebrated for the quantity and fine quality of the gold they yield, and the valley contains many signs of mineral wealth. It was a favourite summer resort of the old Gilgit rulers, and was their last place of [564] refuge when hard pressed by external enemies. The Bagrot people belong almost entirely to the Shin caste.

133 A mile below Gilgit itself the Hunza River joins that of Gilgit. Though fordable in winter, this is in summer a deep and rapid torrent more than a hundred yards in breadth, bringing down with it an enormous quantity of soil from the lofty [648] mountains it drains. Cashmere jurisdiction extends some 25 miles up the valley to a point at which the river makes a sudden bend from a westerly course to south-south-east. As generally happens where these abrupt changes of course in a stream are found, the river here flows between perpendicular rocks, across the face of which none but the most expert cragsmen can find a path. On the occasion of my visit to Hunza in 1876, I suddenly found myself confronted with a more difficult and dangerous piece of ground than I had ever traversed in a tolerably large experience of Himalayan sport. For nearly half a mile it was necessary to scramble over

631 133 the Astor river to its junction with the Indus, and then runs north along the Indus to Bunji. It was once a flourishing tract, but has never recovered from the great flood of 1841, when the Indus was blocked by a landslip below the Hattu Pír, and the valley was turned into a lake. Opposite Bunji is the valley of Sai, and 6 miles farther up the Gilgit river falls into the Indus. Gilgit is about 24 miles from the Indus, and has [241] a considerable area of fertile irrigated land. The Wazárat now includes the tract known as Haramush on the right bank of the Indus, and numerous valleys leading down to the Gilgit river. To the north the boundary reaches Guach Pari on the Hunza road, and up the Kargah nullah as far as the Bhaldi [487] mountain to the south in the direction of Darel. From Gilgit [367] itself mountain roads radiate into the surrounding valleys, and [491] its geographical position now, as in ancient times, renders the fort on the right bank of the Gilgit river an important place. A suspension bridge connects Gilgit with the left bank, which is here as barren as the right bank is fertile. The ancient name of the site under its Hindu Rás was Sargin. Later it was known as Gilit, which the Sikhs and Dográs corrupted into Gilgit, but to the country people it is familiar still as Gilit or Sargin Gilit. It lies in the most mountainous region of the Himálayas. Within a radius of 65 miles there are eleven peaks ranging from 18,000 to 20,000 feet; seven from 20,000 to 22,000 feet; six from 22,000 to 24,000 feet; and eight from 137 24,000 to 26,600 feet. At their bases the mountains are barren and repellent, but at 7,000 feet there are fine forests of juniper and fir. Higher up grows the silver birch, and above all vegetable growth lie sweep after sweep of glacier and eternal snow.

Botany. The pencil cedar is found from 14,400 feet down to 6,000 feet, and sometimes reaches a girth of 30 feet. *Pinus excelsa* grows between 9,500 and 12,000 feet. The edible pine is common in Astor, ranging from 7,000 to 10,000 feet. The useful birch-tree is common, and grows as high as 12,500 feet. The tamarisk does well in the barren valleys up to 6,000 feet. Roughly speaking, the upper limit of vegetation round Gilgit is 16,200 feet; above this the rocks are stained with lichens.

Fauna. Here are found the ibex and *márkhor* (*Capra sibirica* and 136 *C. falconeri*), and their deadly foe, the beautiful snow ounce (*Felis uncia*), and occasionally the wild dog (*Cyon dukhunensis*). The red bear (*Ursus arctus* or *isabellinus*), the snow cock (*Tetraogallus himalayanus*), and the grey partridge are common; and many of the migratory birds of India, wild geese,

3: Imperial Gazetteer G-3 (1889-95) 1909 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3

duck, and quail, pass up and down in the autumn and spring. Below the forest, on the lower and more barren hills, numerous flocks of wild sheep (*Ovis vignei* and *O. nahura*) are met with.

The climate is healthy and dry. At Gilgit itself it is never very cold, and snow seldom lies for more than a few hours. In the summer it is hot owing to the radiation from the rocky mountains, but it is cool compared with the climate of Northern India. The rainfall is very light.

History. The remains of ancient stone buildings and Buddhist carvings suggest that Gilgit was once the seat of a Buddhist or Hindu dynasty, while traces of abandoned cultivation point to the fact that the population in early times was far larger than it is at present. For many centuries the inhabitants of Gilgit have been Muhammadans, and nothing definite is now known of their Hindu predecessors. Tradition relates that the last of the Hindu Rās, Srī Badat, known as Adam-Khor, the 'man-eater,' was killed by a Muhammadan adventurer, who founded a new dynasty known as Trakhane. Srī Badat's rule is said to have extended to Chitrāl, and the introduction of Islām seems to have split up the kingdom into a number of small states carrying on a fratricidal warfare and incessant slave-raiding. The Trakhane dynasty is now extinct, though it is claimed that the present titular Rā of Gilgit has a slight strain of Trakhane blood. In the early part of the nineteenth century we find Yāsīn giving a Rā to Gilgit. He was killed by the ruler of Puniāl, who in turn was killed by Tair Shāh, chief of Nagar. Tair Shāh was succeeded by his son, who was killed by Gauhar Aman, ruler of Yāsīn. For the subsequent history of Gilgit, see KASHMĪR. The history of Astor, or, as the Dogrās call it, Hasora, is intimately connected with that of Skārdu. More than 300 years ago Ghāzī Mukhpun, a Persian adventurer, is said to have married a princess of the Skārdu reigning family. The four sons born of this union became Rās of Skārdu, Astor, Rondu, and Kharmang respectively, and from them are descended the families of the present chiefs of those places. The independence of Astor ceased at the Dogrā conquest. The present titular Rā of Astor is the lineal descendant of Ghāzī Mukhpun. The Dogrā rule has secured peace to the people, but it will be long before the country recovers entirely from the desolating slave-raids of Chilās.

The people. The Wazārat contains 264 villages, and the population, according to the Census of 1901, is 60,885. The pressure on the cultivated area is great, the density being 1,295 persons per square mile. The people of Astor and Gilgit would be

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3
Chitral

000 acquaintance of Raja Akbar Khan, the Chief of Punyal, and his brothers and cousins. Fine fellows, magnificent mountaineers, who were later, under us, to prove "tall men of their hands."

The climate was perfect after Gilgit. We were camped in an apricot orchard, at an altitude of seven thousand feet and over, and the delicious air soon set us up.

[361] 133 Gakuch fort and its cultivation stand high, seven hundred feet or so above the river bed. The formation is curious; the hills, in one fine slope from the snows, sweep out till they finish in an almost sheer cliff into the river, the last few hundred yards before the cliff is reached being comparatively flat. Through this level portion project great rounded masses of rock, water-worn and full of "pot-holes," the remains of glacial action. It looks as if, at some remote period, a huge glacier had flowed down the Ishkuman, and [136] had swept to its left down the Gilgit valley. These rounded hillocks were full of chikor, the mountain partridge, which gave us good sport. In one of them is a cave reputed to be fathomless—really, I suppose, about twenty feet deep—heaped up with human bones. It was said to have been filled by a former ruler of Yasin, and a terror to his neighbours, whose bloodthirsty nature gained him the title of Adam khor, "the man-eater."

643 681 During my halt at Gakuch, Sirdar Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Mehtar's eldest son, who ruled Yasin, and who was to meet me just across the border, bombarded me with letters, and a curious incident occurred with one of his letter carriers. When I handed this man my answer to Nizam's letter, I gave him, as

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3
142
291
136

SHWAL, A SHIN BOY FROM ASTOR, WITH HEAD OF A MARKHOR.

[facing p. 64]

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3
Chitral

cattle. At least so they looked to me when I first caught sight of them, and drew rein to inspect them closely. They were mostly black, but many were there of smoky dun or mouse colour; some carried wide, sweeping horns, others were like polled Angus, but all had the same characteristics; they were very high in the withers, very short-legged, and they carried the most splendid coats, with masses of hair on the shoulder and forearm. They were all half-breds, crossed with the yak, as their bushy tails showed. The colouring was exactly that of a mixed herd at home, but the shape was ungainly. Passing down lower we flushed a couple of splendid specimens of the solitary snipe, which were soon added to the larder.

There was not much new to be seen on our way down after we had regained our old road above Ghizr; the only change was in the colouring. The willow copses in the river bed were now a blaze of gold; the orchards every colour from dark green to almost scarlet; the streams had shrunk, and now, less violent, ran crystal clear, a beautiful ultramarine colour, turning to opal in the deeper pools, and reflecting all the brilliant colouring of the banks. The roads up to our Punyal border, through Nizam-ul-Mulk's country, were vile, and compared ill with Afzul's. We reached Gakuch again on the 15th October, and were met by our Punyali friends some way out: it had been a very trying double march that day, and for once we came to grief. Robertson's servant went down some small drop, horse and all, and the horse promptly bolted. My servant remained to look after him, so that when our kit came into camp, which it did pretty

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3

right next day. We were obliged, as he was a strict Mahomedan, to assure him that the mixture was medicine and contained no wine.

The Deosai plain is a great basin about forty miles across, averaging twelve thousand feet in height, and surrounded by a circle of snows rising three to four thousand feet higher. It is cut up by rolling spurs projecting from the main ranges into numerous broad shallow valleys, through which run rapid streams. We were too early in crossing it, and the grass had not properly grown, though there were patches here and there and some flowers. It was a most desolate scene. The bare plains stretch away for miles without the vestige of a tree, and with only here and there a few patches of stunted dwarf juniper. Later on, when the grass springs up, they become favourite grazing grounds. We had to carry even the fuel for our camp, and of course could get no supplies, as there is not a trace of habitation throughout the plains. The only animal life is furnished by the marmots, which live there in great numbers, and whose curious whistle sounds weirdly in keeping with their surroundings.

We passed out of the plain by a razor-backed pass, about fifteen thousand feet high, the last part of the ascent of which, in greasy mud and soft snow, was very trying for baggage animals. The descent to the Skardu plain is by a steep ravine which drops eight thousand feet in a couple of short marches. It was a funnel down which a raging wind poured at night, making a halt there hideous. The march down was very bad, the stream had to be crossed perpetually, each time getting

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3

000 to go back and follow by the path I had come, an easy enough job for him. My weight and height were against me at performances of this sort, and I used to envy my light and lithe shikari, to whom no ground came amiss.

One way or another we all had exciting times stalking. I have a nightmare recollection of one snow slope, which dropped a couple of thousand feet below one and ended in ghastly precipices, which we had to cross to reach ibex. The slightest slip meant death, and we had no ropes or ice axes, nothing but one small alpen stock with which to dig out steps in the frozen snow. Providence protects the ignorant mountaineer. A Pathan orderly of Manners-Smith's flew down a similar snow slope on one occasion, and, luckily for himself, took the first turn to the right, which landed him in a soft snow bank. The first turn to the left would have carried him over a cliff a couple of hundred feet high on to rocks.

136 On the other hand, at certain seasons, both markhor and ibex can be got on fairly easy ground, and during a severe winter we have more than once watched markhor feeding on the slopes of the mountain behind my house at Gilgit, on ground almost as easy as the South Downs. There are, generally speaking, four well-defined belts of ground on which you find game. The snow to which in summer the ibex retire, never leaving it except to feed, and the grass and juniper-covered slopes immediately below the line of perpetual snow, where at the same season you will find the markhor, form the first belt; the second is generally a line of cliffs,

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Dard AV3

the third a slope varying from a few hundred to some thousands of feet in depth; and the fourth, the final perpendicular cliffs into the valley. Of course this is a generalisation, and some ground goes up thousands of feet into the snows like a sheer wall, broken with but tiny patches of forest and narrow lines of grazing, and on this you find the biggest markhor.

The altitude at which you find game depends generally on the snow line, and the work is easier perhaps in winter than in summer, except that you are handicapped by the shortness of the days, and that in some valleys the lower ground is distinctly worse than the higher. To me three-quarters of the enjoyment of the stalk lies in the scenery, in getting up above the animals and studying them, perhaps for hours, in listening to the call of the snow cock at dawn, in lying watching the little round-eared rock rats, or the circling flight of the eagle, in the freedom and the silence of the mountains. I always feel like a murderer when successful, and miserable when I have missed, but I loved going out, and envied the easier-worked subaltern under me, who could get away fairly often for his few days' shoot. With all who worked under me I always went on one plan,—I asked of them their best work and got it, and it was often at very high pressure for weeks at a time, but the moment I could I gave leave for shooting. The results were excellent, no man was ever better or more loyally served, no man had ever a cheerier, brighter, and harder set of officers working for him.